

Director of Justice Center resigns, takes job as assistant district attorney

By JOHN HINTON
Chronicle Staff Writer

Lisa V. Menefee has resigned as executive director of the Neighborhood Justice Center to become an assistant district attorney.

"I got a job offer that I couldn't refuse," Mrs. Menefee said in an interview Tuesday. "I

"I still plan to do volunteer work at the center. I am confident that the center will make it through its financial troubles."

— Lisa V. Menefee

had an excellent offer in the district attorney's office."

District Attorney Donald K. Tisdale hired Mrs. Menefee last month, she said. She had worked at the Justice Center for about 18 months, she said.

The center offers a mediation program whose clientele is 65 percent black. It has experienced financial trouble recently, but

Mrs. Menefee said that was not the reason for her resignation.

"I still plan to do volunteer work at the center," Mrs. Menefee said. "I am confident that the center will make it through its financial troubles."

Mrs. Menefee said she works in District Court dealing with juvenile, criminal and traffic

cases. She will work as a volunteer at the center during evenings, she said.

Mrs. Menefee was the second executive director at the center. Paul O. Cloud resigned after serving as director for 18 months.

Shirley O. Gibson, office manager at the center, said the center's board of directors has

not hired a replacement for Mrs. Menefee.

In the meantime, Mrs. Gibson is running the center. "I worked very closely with Mrs. Menefee," Mrs. Gibson said. "I haven't had any problems yet."

Mrs. Gibson said she will not apply for the directorship. "I love what I do now," she said. "My hands are full."

Mrs. Gibson also serves as a bookkeeper and an accountant at the center.

A volunteer from the Winston-Salem Urban League and an employee under the Job Training Partnership Act provide staff help.

Mrs. Menefee will work with the center's application for funding with the United Way Inc., Mrs. Gibson said.

The center, located at 1201 E. Ninth St., received \$9,730 from the city when the Board of Aldermen approved the \$145.5 million city budget in June.



Lisa Menefee, right, who has left the Neighborhood Justice Center for a position in the district attorney's office, with Shirley Gibson, who is running the center until a new director is found (photo by James Parker).

The center deals with cases such as misdemeanor offenses, domestic problems, neighborhood disputes, small claims, landlord-and-tenant

disputes and consumer problems. It uses volunteers to mediate the cases and has been praised for easing the caseloads in the courts. The center is an outgrowth of the

East Winston Crime Task Force Inc. The center handles 600 cases a year and has a 97-percent resolution rate.

A bigger puzzle: Drayton indicted in first-degree murder of Blanche Bryson

By JOHN HINTON
Chronicle Staff Writer

Merritt William Drayton was indicted Monday for the first-degree murder of a retired school dietitian and charged for a second time in a manslaughter case, further complicating a puzzle that involves three deaths and three defendants.

A Forsyth County grand jury indicted Drayton, 28, of 345 E. Ninth St., for the murder of Blanche Bryson, 65, of 2705 Gilmer Ave. Mrs. Bryson was

found dead in her house last Dec. 10 with a lamp cord wrapped around her neck.

An autopsy showed that Mrs. Bryson died of strangulation. Her body was found next to the front door by her son, Jeffrey T. Bryson, a Winston-Salem attorney.

Drayton also was charged for the second time for the manslaughter death of Mary Annette Smith, his 42-year-old girlfriend. Drayton allegedly pushed Ms. Smith down a flight of stairs and was arrested on

March 19. District Court Judge Kason Keiger had dismissed the manslaughter charge against Drayton in a probable-cause hearing on May 5.

Drayton is being held without bond in the Forsyth County Jail. He will appear in Forsyth County Superior Court July 14 to be arraigned for Mrs. Bryson's murder and the manslaughter death of Ms. Smith.

In addition, Drayton is one of three black men, including Darryl Eugene Hunt, who were charged

with first-degree murder in the death of Arthur Wilson in September 1983. Wilson, 57, of 3045 N. Patterson Ave., was found beaten to death outside of a liquor house in the 1700 block of Claremont Avenue.

In a controversial and widely publicized trial, Hunt, 21, was sentenced to life in prison last June after he was convicted of the rape and murder of Mrs. Sykes, a copy editor for *The Sentinel*.

Many in the black community believe Hunt, who has begun to

serve a life sentence, was railroaded and have raised money to help finance an appeal.

But the movement for Hunt suffered a setback when Drayton testified at the May 5 probable cause hearing that he, Hunt and Hunt's best friend, Sammy Lee Mitchell, beat Wilson to death with an axe handle and robbed him of \$105.

Drayton said his conscience made him confess, but he pleaded not guilty last month, as did Hunt and Mitchell, in Wilson's murder.

Hunt's supporters speculated then that police may have struck a deal with Drayton to testify against Hunt and Mitchell in exchange for having the manslaughter charge dismissed.

They say now that Drayton's most recent indictments show how little credibility he has as a witness.

"His testimony has been questionable ever since he made it," said the Rev. Carlton A.G. Eversley, pastor of Dellbrook Presbyterian Church.

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Stokes County woman sues Burlington Industries for sexual harassment

By JOHN HINTON
Chronicle Staff Writer

A black Stokes County woman has filed a \$26 million lawsuit against Burlington Industries Inc., alleging she was sexually harassed by her white manager.

Annie S. Brown, who worked as a supervisor at a Burlington yard plant in Madison for nine years, contends that Ernest Whitmore sexually harassed her during the past three years.

Her attorneys, Harold L. Kennedy III and Harvey L. Kennedy of Winston-Salem, filed the lawsuit in the Guilford County Superior Court on Thursday.

Mrs. Brown, 36, of Walnut Cove, is seeking \$1 million in ac-

tual damages and \$25 million in punitive damages.

"I don't think it (the lawsuit) will rectify anything," Mrs. Brown said in telephone interview from her home on Tuesday. "This should not go unnoticed, however."

Bryant A. Haskins, a spokesman for Burlington Industries, said Monday that company officials do not comment on any pending court actions. Haskins also said he was unaware that a lawsuit was filed against the company.

The lawsuit contends that Whitmore struck Mrs. Brown with his hand against her buttocks, pinched and felt her leg,

and demanded that she have sex with him.

The lawsuit further states that Whitmore made "lewd and lascivious" remarks to Mrs. Brown, falsely criticized her in front of company officials after she refused to have sex with him and placed her in fear of bodily injury.

"Such conduct was extreme and outrageous," the lawsuit says.

Mrs. Brown said she complained several times to Louis Bottoms, the manager of her department and her supervisor, about the sexual harassment. Bottoms refused to take any action to pre-

vent the harassment, the lawsuit contends.

Other female employees at the Madison plant complained to company officials that Whitmore had sexually harassed them, but they didn't take any action to stop the abuse, the lawsuit says.

Mrs. Brown resigned in May 1985 when the company laid off 60 workers at the Madison plant. She said she decided to quit after company officials told her that she was going to be demoted from her supervisor's position to an operator, she said.

Mrs. Brown said Whitmore no longer works with the company, but she doesn't know if he was fired or if he resigned.

Mrs. Brown suffered psychological trauma and stress and humiliation, the lawsuit says. "The facts constitute actions by the defendants which were willful, wanton, intentional, malicious and in total disregard of the rights of (Mrs. Brown)," the suit says.

The lawsuit contends that Burlington Industries was careless and negligent in retaining Whitmore. "Burlington Industries knew or should have known that he had a reckless and abusive disposition toward female employees, including (Mrs. Brown)," it says.

The sexual harassment against Mrs. Brown by Whitmore was an

intrusion into the private affairs and personal life of Mrs. Brown and invaded her privacy, the lawsuit states.

Burlington Industries is the largest textile manufacturing plant in the country, Haskins said.

Mrs. Brown worked as a machine operator at the plant for six years. She attended London High School in Walnut Cove for two years and later obtained her high school diploma from Rockingham Community College in Rockingham.

Mrs. Brown has earned one year of college credits from the school, she said.

'Big Sisters' will help teen mothers

By CHERYL WILLIAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

When 15-year-old Beth (not her real name) got pregnant at 13, most of her female friends deserted her.

And even after she had the baby, things were not the same with most of them because Beth carried the stigma of being a teen mother.

Beth often found herself keeping things inside because she had no one to talk to. She said she couldn't talk to her younger sister, nor to her mother, because they were not getting along with each other.

But a new program being started by Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Forsyth County Inc. will provide Beth, the mother of an 18-month-old son, with someone she can talk to.

The program matches pregnant teen-agers and teen-age mothers with an adult female friend.

Shirley Eatmon, a social worker with the agency, will be responsible for making the matches.

She said the goals of the program are to postpone additional pregnancies during the teen-age years and to encourage the girls to finish school.

"A big sister is a friend who can provide guidance to a girl,"

Ms. Eatmon said. "The role of the big sister is not to tell the girl how to live or what to do with her pregnancy but to mainly give support."

"Many of these girls have low self-esteem, and they lack a real



Shirley Eatmon

sense of the future," she said. "My hope is that through a big-sister relationship, they will develop self-esteem and a sense of what's out there and available to them."

The program will also offer peer support-group sessions for the participants.

The program is open to girls 17 years old and younger who are either pregnant or teen mothers in school or else motivated enough to want to go back to school, Ms. Eatmon said.

Ms. Eatmon said that so far the program has received several referrals from Charlene Miller, nurse coordinator at the Optional Education Center. Ms. Eatmon said that later she hopes to get referrals from other health professionals and the health department.

Ms. Eatmon said that the idea to initiate the program here came up during the screening process for children for the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program. When learning more about the family, she said she found that a portion of the mothers had had their first child when they were teen-agers.

"I saw mothers who had had their first child at 15," she said. "Some are now in their late 20s. They did not finish high school. Some are welfare dependents and living in the projects and now have three or four kids."

Ms. Eatmon said that in the process of organizing the program, she had talked to Mrs. Miller, who said that she was beginning to notice a cycle.

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